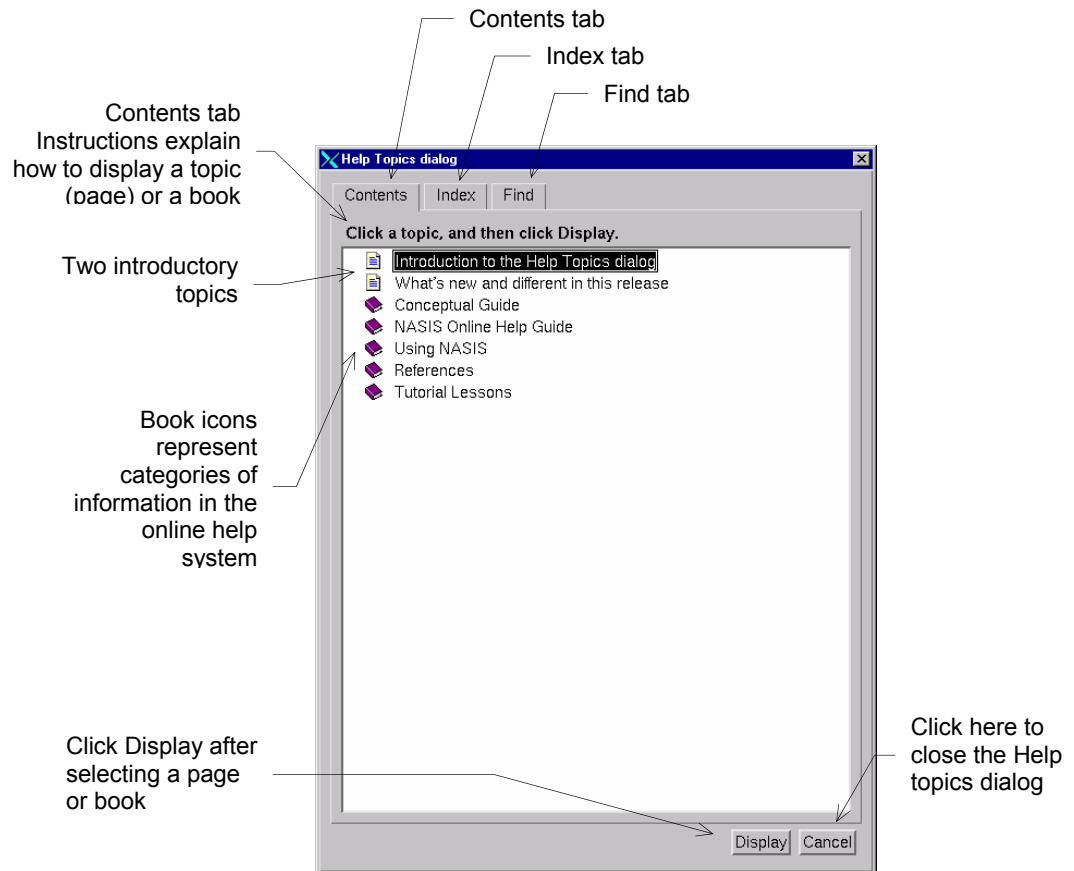# Chapter 4 Using Online Help

The NASIS online help system gives you quick access to information you need to do your job. A comprehensive tool that lets you view the help topics on screen or print them, NASIS online help is both a hierarchy and a web of over four thousand help topics.

This lesson explains the help system and ways to find information; how to display topics so you can read them comfortably on the screen; how to set bookmarks so you can quickly access frequently used topics; and how to print topics to a configured printer.

Using the Help Topics Dialog

 Chapter 2 introduced you to the Help button on the NASIS tool bar. Chapter 3 demonstrated the Help button and introduced you to the NASIS Help menu and its five options. In this lesson, you will use the Contents option to activate the help system then learn how to use a feature called the Help Topics dialog.

1. Click the NASIS **Help** menu.

2. Activate the help system by clicking **Contents.** The Help Topics dialog appears. It's designed like a file folder system with tabs across the top.

Contents tab

Index tab

Find tab

Contents tab
Instructions explain
how to display a topic
(page) or a book

Two introductory
topics

Book icons
represent
categories of
information in the
online help
system

Click Display after
selecting a page
or book

Click here to
close the Help
topics dialog

Help Topics dialog

Contents   Index   Find

Click a topic, and then click Display.

Introduction to the Help Topics dialog
What's new and different in this release
Conceptual Guide
NASIS Online Help Guide
Using NASIS
References
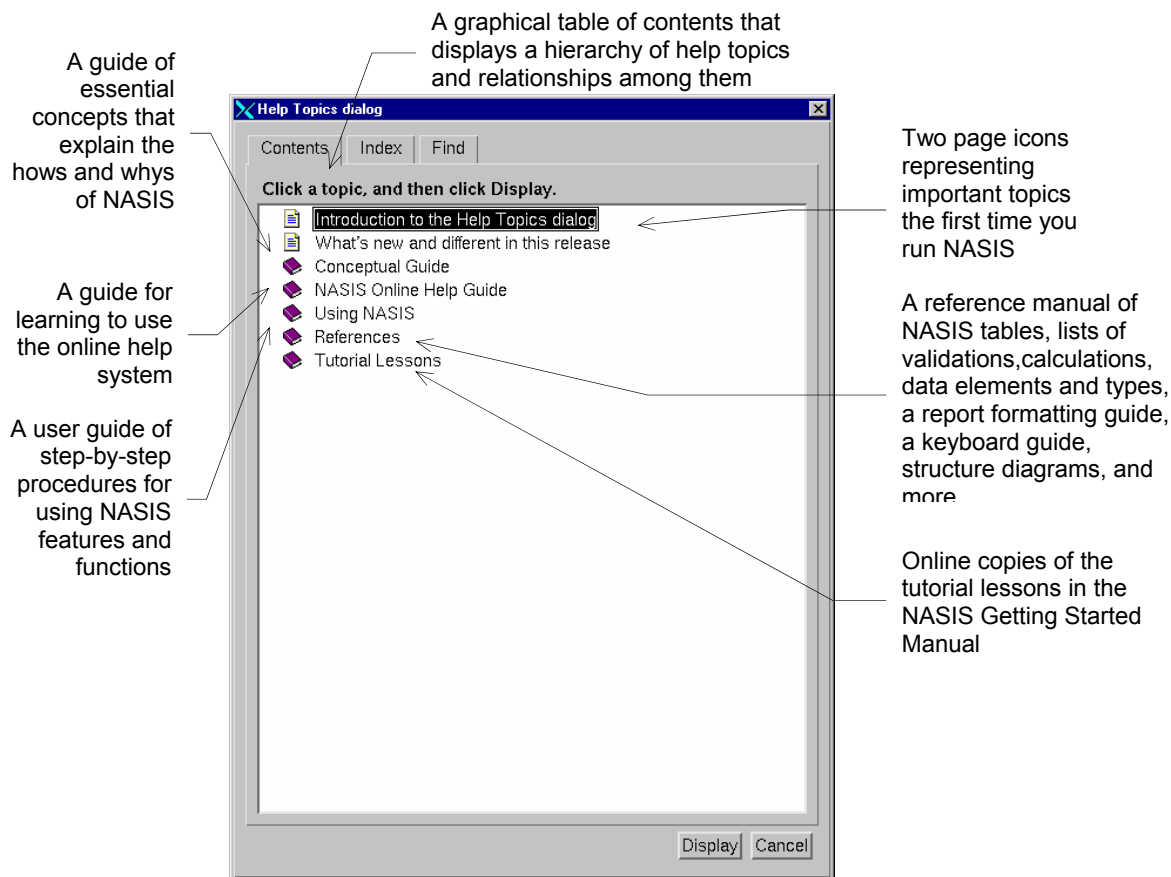Tutorial Lessons

Display   Cancel

Note: The Help Topics dialog is a central point from which you can access virtually all NASIS online help topics. It does not itself display the help text. The topics containing text are displayed in the NASIS Online Help main window that you will see shortly.

3. Move between the **Contents, Index,** and **Find** tabs by clicking them.

   Note: The first time you access the Find tab dialog in each help session, you will see the message: "Loading FTS Index File . . ." This message is displayed briefly and requires no action. However, the first time you access the Find tab after a new installation or upgrade of *Hyperhelp,* the program displays the Find Index - Build Options dialog. Before the program creates a full-text index (.fts file), it gives you the option of customizing your settings. If you see this message, click Continue to accept the default settings. The fts file is placed in the hh directory created by the installation.
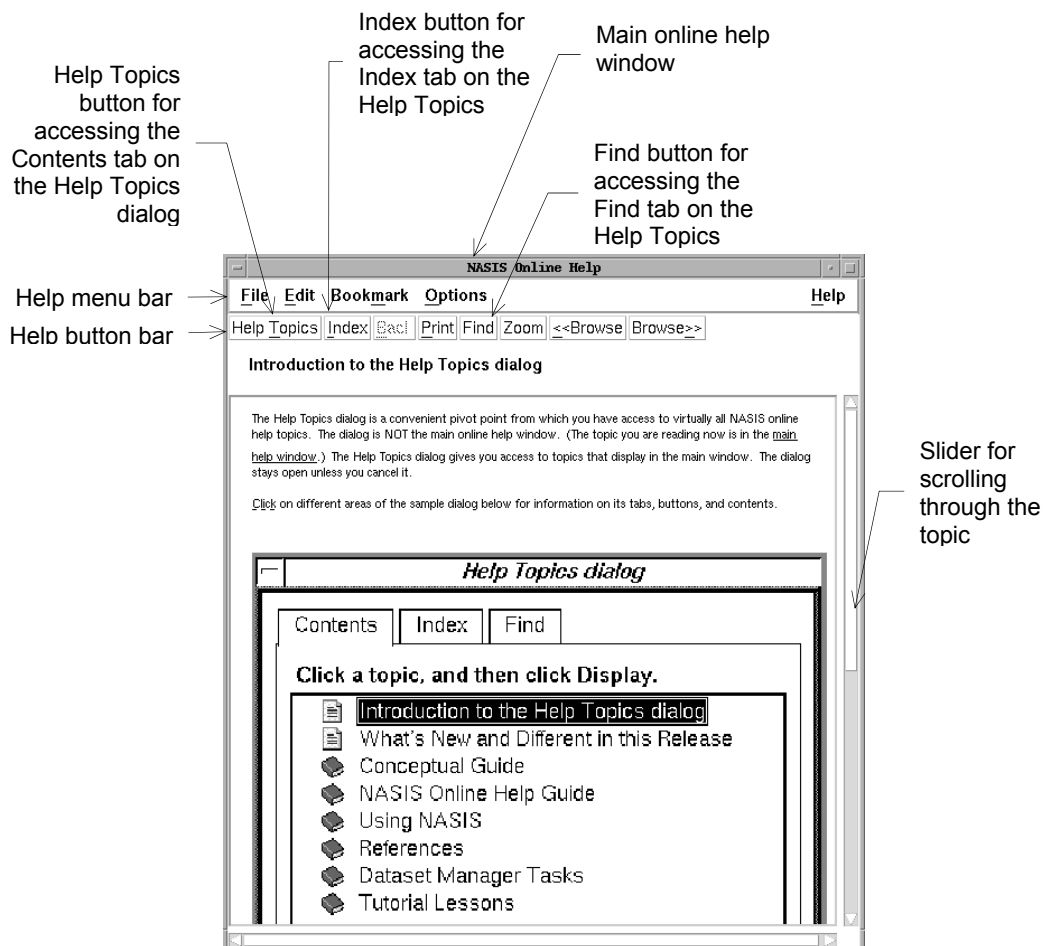
4. On the **Contents** tab dialog, read the titles of the book and page icons. The page **icons** represent two important topics: Introduction to Help Topics Dialog" and "What's new and different in this release." Generally speaking, think of the Contents tab as a library of electronic books. It gives you access to several distinct (though linked) books, or guides. Refer to the callouts below for an explanation of each book.

A guide of essential concepts that explain the hows and whys of NASIS

A graphical table of contents that displays a hierarchy of help topics and relationships among them

Two page icons representing important topics the first time you run NASIS

A guide for learning to use the online help system

A user guide of step-by-step procedures for using NASIS features and functions

A reference manual of NASIS tables, lists of validations,calculations, data elements and types, a report formatting guide, a keyboard guide, structure diagrams, and more

Online copies of the tutorial lessons in the NASIS Getting Started Manual

Help Topics dialog

Contents | Index | Find

Click a topic, and then click Display.

- Introduction to the Help Topics dialog
- What's new and different in this release
- Conceptual Guide
- NASIS Online Help Guide
- Using NASIS
- References
- Tutorial Lessons

Display | Cancel

Note: The Help Topics dialog is like a "home base." It can be a place **to** return to when you have been browsing through the help system and are not sure where to go or where you are. The Help Topics dialog can be sized and placed anywhere on your monitor.

5. Open a help topic by highlighting **Introduction to the Help Topics dialog** and clicking the **Display** button. (Or, you can double-click the page icon.)

Note: The NASIS Online Help window appears. The Help Topics dialog gives you access to topics that are displayed in the main help window. The Help Topics dialog stays open unless you cancel it or close the main help window. From the main help window, you can access the Help Topics dialog by clicking the Help Topics button, the Index button, or the Find button.

Index button for accessing the Index tab on the Help Topics

Main online help window

Help Topics button for accessing the Contents tab on the Help Topics dialog

Find button for accessing the Find tab on the Help Topics

Help menu bar

Help button bar

Slider for scrolling through the topic

NASIS Online Help

File   Edit   Bookmark   Options   Help

Help Topics │ Index │ Back │ Print │ Find │ Zoom │ <<Browse │ Browse>>

Introduction to the Help Topics dialog

The Help Topics dialog is a convenient pivot point from which you have access to virtually all NASIS online help topics. The dialog is NOT the main online help window. (The topic you are reading now is in the main help window.) The Help Topics dialog gives you access to topics that display in the main window. The dialog stays open unless you cancel it.

Click on different areas of the sample dialog below for information on its tabs, buttons, and contents.

Help Topics dialog

Contents │ Index │ Find

Click a topic, and then click Display.

Introduction to the Help Topics dialog
What's New and Different in this Release
Conceptual Guide
NASIS Online Help Guide
Using NASIS
References
Dataset Manager Tasks
Tutorial Lessons

Note: The main help window contains several menus and buttons some of which are demonstrated later in this lesson and others of which are explained in online help. When you are finished looking at the main help window, you can move it or reduce it to an icon.
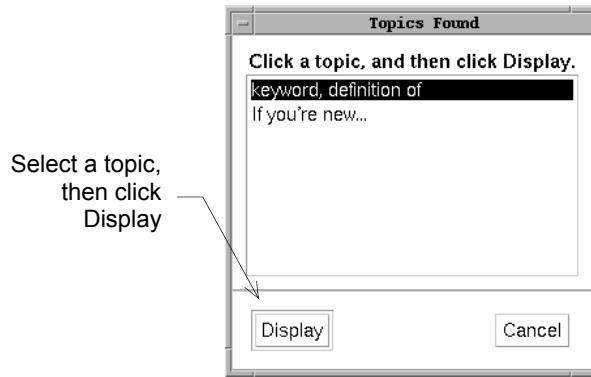
6. From the main help window, return to the **Index** tab on the Help Topics dialog by clicking the **Index** button on the button bar.

   Note: Using the Index tab is like looking up a word in the index of a book. You type a keyword and the help system displays a list of topics based on your entry.

7. Examine the parts of the **Index** tab dialog.
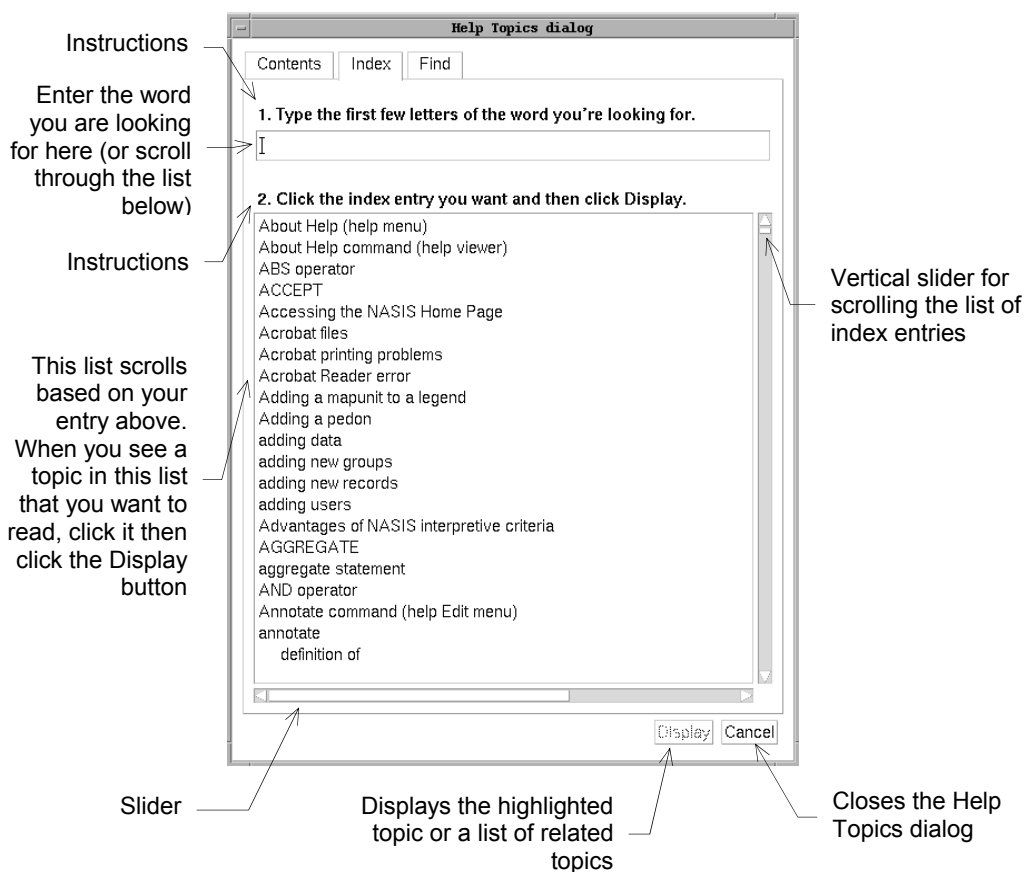
8. Type **keyword** in the Index tab dialog. The list highlights the term keywords.

9. Click the **Display** button at the bottom of the Index tab dialog. The following screen appears:
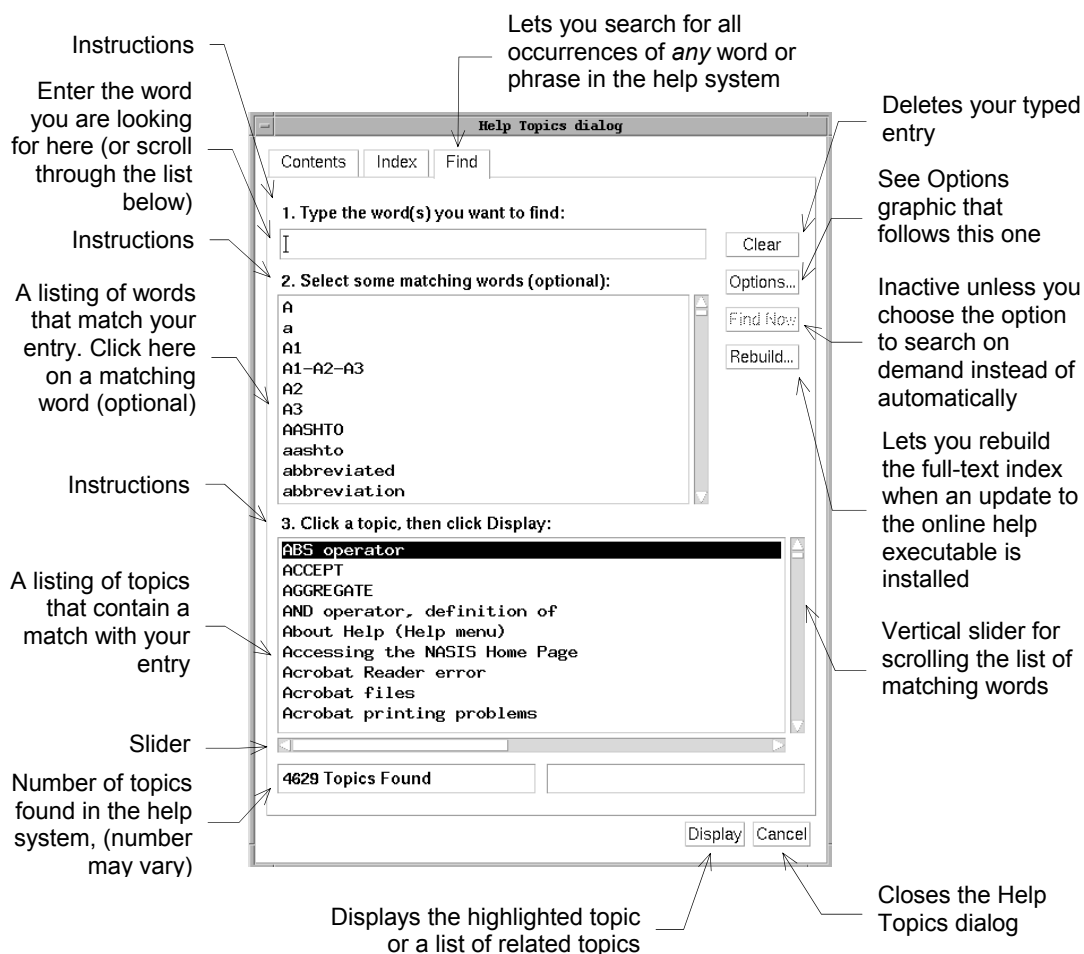
```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ▫            Topics Found                 │
├──────────────────────────────────────────┤
│ Click a topic, and then click Display.    │
│ ┌────────────────────────────────────────┐│
│ │keyword, definition of                  ││
│ │If you're new...                        ││
│ │                                        ││
│ │                                        ││
│ │                                        ││
│ │                                        ││
│ │                                        ││
│ └────────────────────────────────────────┘│
│                                            │
│  ┌─────────┐          ┌─────────┐         │
│  │ Display │          │ Cancel  │         │
│  └─────────┘          └─────────┘         │
└──────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Select a topic, then click Display

10. For a definition of keyword, click the **Display** button.

    Note: The definition of *keyword,* like all topics accessed from the Help Topics dialog, is displayed in the main help window.
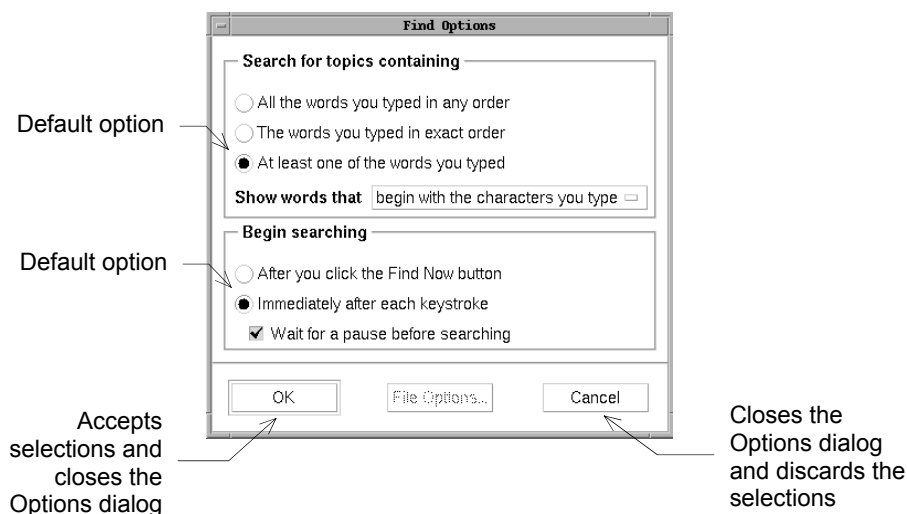
11. In the entry **field** on the Index tab, delete **keyword** by backspacing (or highlighting and overwriting it). Type **conventions** and click the **Display** button.

12. A topic appears in the main help window titled "Recognizing help conventions." This topic explains the graphical symbols you will come across in help topics. When you are comfortable with the Index tab dialog, go on to step 13.

13. Referring to the Help Topics dialog, click the **Find** tab.

    Note: The first time you access the Find tab dialog in each help session, you will see the message: "Loading FTS Index File..." This message is displayed briefly and requires no action. However, the **first** time you access the Find tab after a new installation or upgrade of *HyperHelp,* the program displays the Find Index - Build Options dialog. Before the program creates a full-text index (.fts **file),** it gives you the option of customizing your settings. If you see this message, click Continue to accept the default settings. The fts file is placed in the hh directory created by the installation.
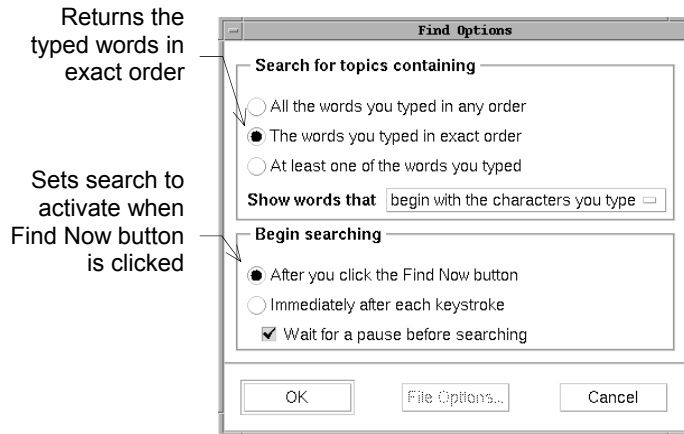
14. Examine the parts of the **Find** tab dialog (shown on the following page).

Instructions

Lets you search for all occurrences of *any* word or phrase in the help system

Enter the word you are looking for here (or scroll through the list below)

Deletes your typed entry

Instructions

See Options graphic that follows this one

A listing of words that match your entry. Click here on a matching word (optional)

Inactive unless you choose the option to search on demand instead of automatically

Instructions

Lets you rebuild the full-text index when an update to the online help executable is installed

A listing of topics that contain a match with your entry

Vertical slider for scrolling the list of matching words

Slider

Number of topics found in the help system, (number may vary)

Help Topics dialog

Contents | Index | Find

1. Type the word(s) you want to find:

Clear

2. Select some matching words (optional):

A
a
A1
A1-A2-A3
A2
A3
AASHTO
aashto
abbreviated
abbreviation

Options...
Find Now
Rebuild...

3. Click a topic, then click Display:

ABS operator
ACCEPT
AGGREGATE
AND operator, definition of
About Help (Help menu)
Accessing the NASIS Home Page
Acrobat Reader error
Acrobat files
Acrobat printing problems

4629 Topics Found

Display | Cancel

Displays the highlighted topic or a list of related topics

Closes the Help Topics dialog

15. Click the **Options** button. Familiarize yourself with the dialog.

Find Options

Search for topics containing

Default option

○ All the words you typed in any order
○ The words you typed in exact order
● At least one of the words you typed

Show words that | begin with the characters you type

Begin searching

Default option

○ After you click the Find Now button
● Immediately after each keystroke
  ☑ Wait for a pause before searching

OK | File Options.. | Cancel

Accepts selections and closes the Options dialog

Closes the Options dialog and discards the selections
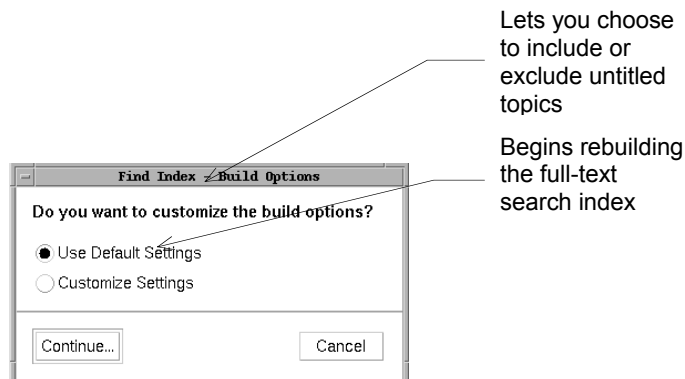
16. Make the selections shown below. (Later, this will narrow one of your search results from 3850 to 8 matches.)

Returns the typed words in exact order

Sets search to activate when Find Now button is clicked

Find Options

Search for topics containing

○ All the words you typed in any order
● The words you typed in exact order
○ At least one of the words you typed

Show words that | begin with the characters you type |

Begin searching

● After you click the Find Now button
○ Immediately after each keystroke
☑ Wait for a pause before searching

| OK | File Options... | Cancel |

17. After making the above selections, click **OK**.

18. Another option on the Find dialog is the Rebuild**.**

    You should no longer need to rebuild the help index now that NASIS is on a central server. Click the **Rebuild** button. The following dialog appears.

Lets you choose to include or exclude untitled topics

Begins rebuilding the full-text search index

Find Index / Build Options

Do you want to customize the build options?

● Use Default Settings
○ Customize Settings

| Continue... | Cancel |

    Note: The purpose of this rebuild option (which, by the way, appears automatically the very first time the Find dialog is accessed after the help system is installed) is to eliminate the need to send a very large fts file with the installation program. Also, when you are sent updates to the online help system, you will want to rebuild the full-text index to include any new or modified topics.
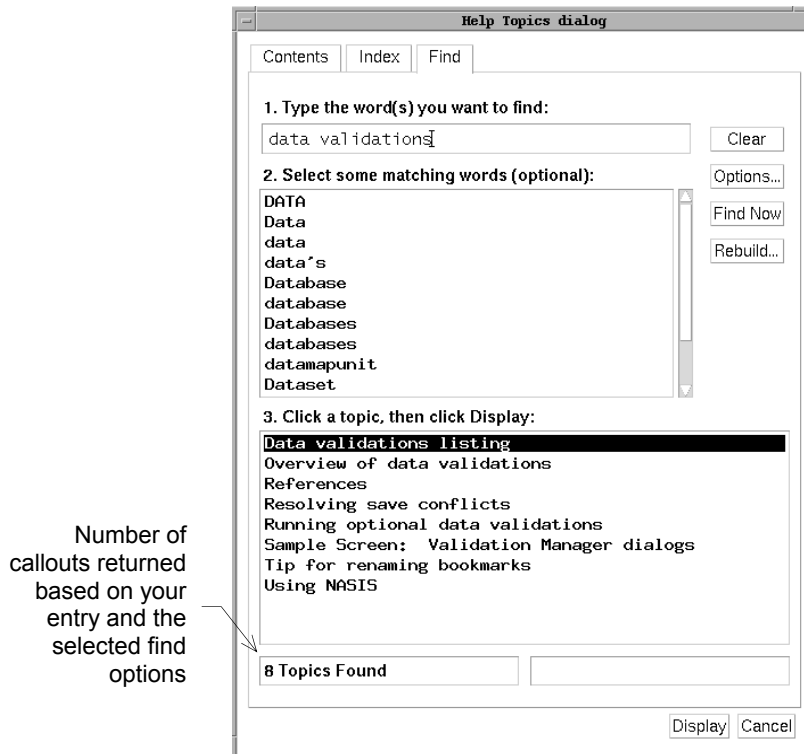
19. Choose the default settings by clicking **Continue.**

    Note: HyperHelp begins rebuilding the full-text search index. A dialog shows the progress, listing the number of words indexed and the name of the help executable file (shown on the next page). When finished building, the program displays a message reporting that the program is loading the fts index file.

Find Index – Build Status

Build in progress...

Number of Words Indexed: 128000

Current File: xnasis.hlp

Cancel
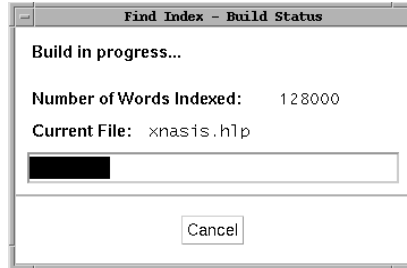
Note: When finished loading, the dialogs close and the program returns to the Find dialog.

20. In the Find dialog, type **data validations.**

21. Click **Find Now.** On the bottom of the dialog, eight topics are reported found. (Do not be concerned if the number is slightly different on your system.)

Help Topics dialog

Contents | Index | Find

1. Type the word(s) you want to find:

data validations   Clear

2. Select some matching words (optional):   Options...

DATA
Data
data
data's
Database
database
Databases
databases
datamapunit
Dataset

Find Now

Rebuild...

3. Click a topic, then click Display:

Data validations listing
Overview of data validations
References
Resolving save conflicts
Running optional data validations
Sample Screen: Validation Manager dialogs
Tip for renaming bookmarks
Using NASIS

Number of callouts returned based on your entry and the selected find options

8 Topics Found

Display | Cancel

Note: If you had used the default setting on the Options dialog, you would have returned 3850 topics.

22. Highlight the topic- **Overview of data validations** and click **Display.** The main help window displays the topic.

23. For tutorial purposes, at this point you can do one of three things: Continue experimenting with the Find Options dialog; read some of the topics on data validations; or go on to learn about bookmarks.

Using Bookmarks

You may want a quick way to access frequently used help topics or ones you had difficulty finding. You can set bookmarks throughout the help system just as you would a printed book. Once a bookmark is set, it takes you right to the page.

For this exercise, let's say you have trouble remembering whether validations are run against tables or objects. You want to set a bookmark on "Overview of data validations" which lists validation rules you need to be reminded of periodically.

Setting bookmarks

Similar to setting a bookmark in a printed book, you must open the page (or topic) before you can set a bookmark.

1. If the topic "Overview of data validations" is not still displayed in your main help window, repeat steps 20 and 21 on page 4.8 to display it.

2. In the main help window, click the **Bookmark** menu as shown in the next figure.

Bookmark menu
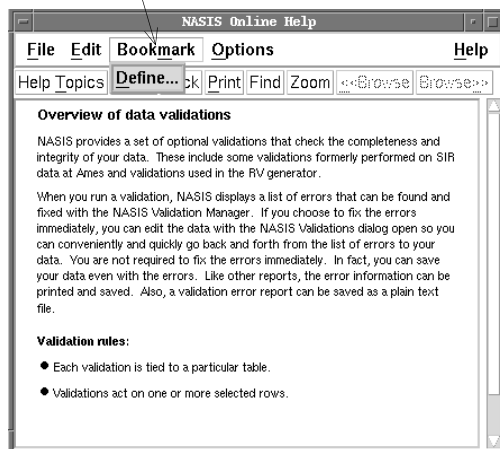
Note: You can access bookmarks only from the main online help window where the Bookmark menu is displayed, not from the Help Topics dialog.

3. Click **Define**.

   Note: The Bookmark dialog appears. The current topic automatically appears in the Selection box.

4. Highlight the text in the Selection box. Replace the text by typing **data validations** in the Selection box.

   Note: You can call your bookmarks anything you want. For example, "validation rules" might make more sense for this bookmark than "Overview of data validations." When the bookmark would mean more to you in your own words, rename it. You must name a bookmark when you create it, or the topic title will be assigned as the bookmark name.

5. Add the topic to your list of bookmarks by clicking **OK.**

6. In the main topic window, again, select the **Bookmark** menu. Notice the new bookmark appears on your list of bookmarks.

Accessing bookmarks

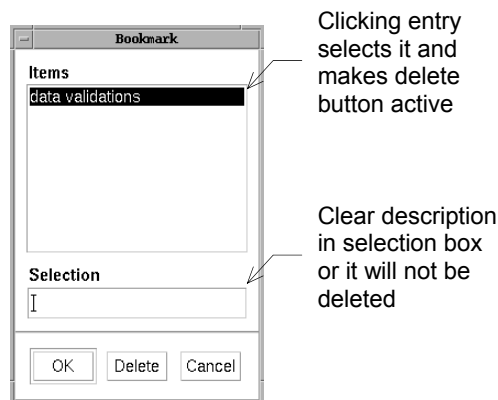Bookmarks can only be accessed from the menu bar of the main help window.

1. On **the** main help window, click the Help Topics button.

   Note: The Help Topics dialog appears. open the main help window by clicking a topic such as **Introduction to the Help Topics dialog,** and clicking the Display button.

2. Click **Bookmark** on the menu bar.

3. Select the data validations topic by clicking or typing its number. It takes you to the right page.

Removing bookmarks

At some point, you may want to clean up your bookmark list and remove those you no longer use. This procedure demonstrates how to delete them from your list.

1. In the main help window, select the **Bookmark** menu.

2. Select **Define.**
   Note: All of your bookmarks are displayed in the Items box.

3. Select the bookmark you want to delete. For this demonstration, select the **data validations** bookmark.

   Note: If the only bookmark in your list is data validations, it will already be highlighted. However, you still need to click on it in the Items box to make the Delete button active.

4. Highlight data validations in the Selection box, then press your backspace key. This will clear the Selection box.

   Note: If you do not clear the contents of the selection box, data validations will remain on your bookmark list when you delete and close the Bookmark box.
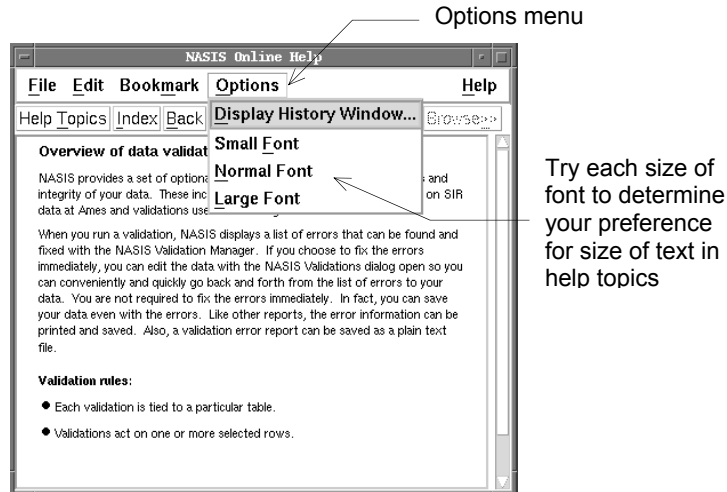

Clicking entry selects it and makes delete button active

Clear description in selection box or it will not be deleted

5. Click **Delete**, then **OK**.

6. Click **Bookmark** to verify that the **data validations** topic is no longer on your bookmark list.

Improving the Display Quality of Help Topics

Depending on personal preferences, you may find the type size of help topics too small or too large. You have two ways to make the text size more readable from your monitor.

1. In the main help window, click the **Options** menu.

Options menu

Try each size of font to determine your preference for size of text in help topics

2. Click each size and find the one most suited to you.

3. Another way to change the size of the text is with the Zoom button. Click the **Zoom** button on the Help toolbar. The Zoom dialog appears. Adjust the Zoom Factor and click **Apply**. This adjustment is temporary. You must set it each time you enter the help system.

Click here and hold the mouse button down while moving the slider

Closes the Zoom dialog without making any adjustments that were not first applied

Resets the zoom factor to 100 percent

Activates the new zoom factor and also keeps the Zoom dialog open

Activates the new zoom factor and closes the Zoom dialog
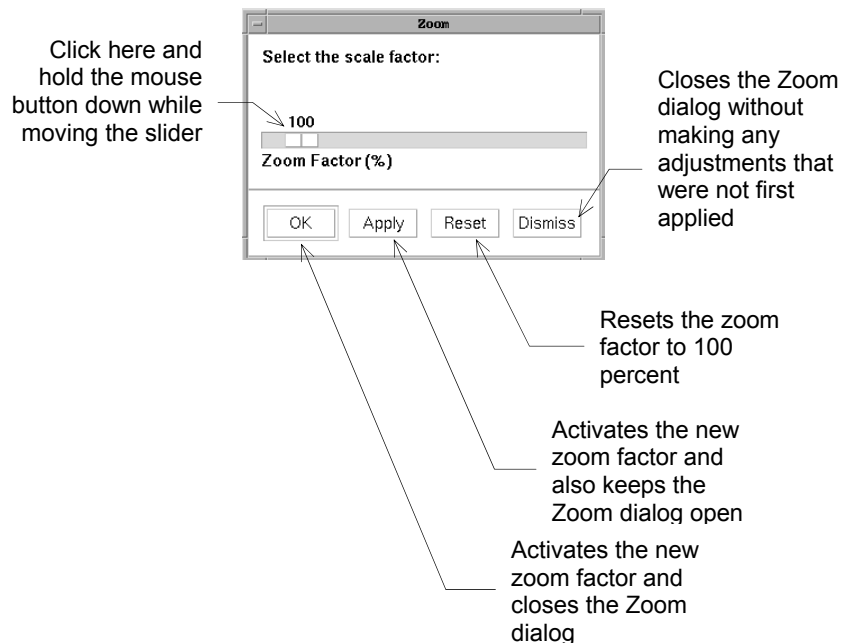
4. Experiment with the zoom factor and buttons until you find a text size you find comfortable.

Printing Help Topics

The NASIS Administrator needs to configure the printer(s) before you can print help topics. (Instructions for configuring a remote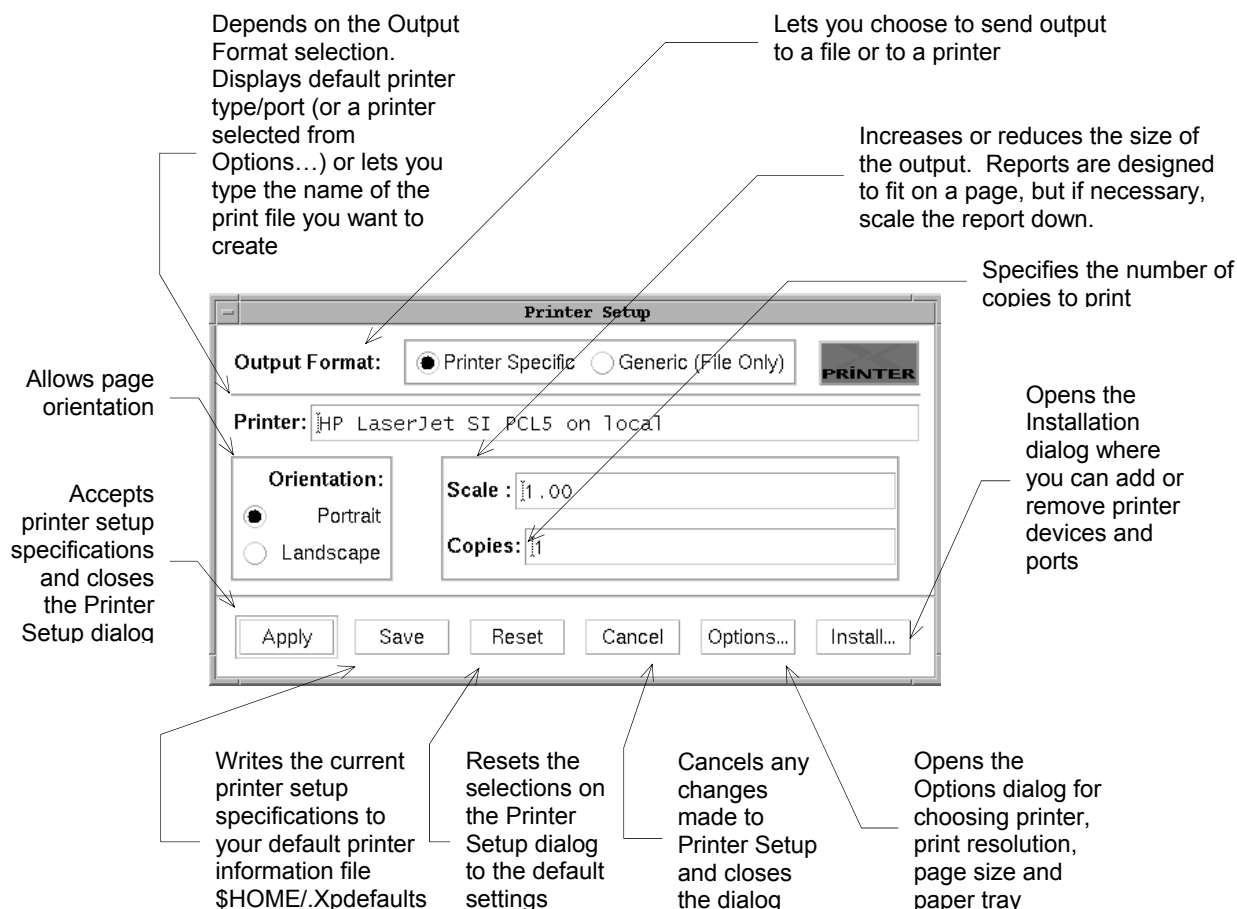 UNIX printer are in Appendix C.) Until *HyperHelp Xprinter* (the NASIS third-party program) is configured to recognize your printers, it will only print to a file, even if the Printer Setup dialog indicates that you are printing to a printer. After a printer is configured, you can use this part of the lesson to learn to print help topics.

You have three options for printing help topics: print the current topic, print all topics, or print selected topics. However, you must first select the destination of the print job and options such as print resolution, page size, and so forth.

1. On the online help **File** menu, select **Printer Setup.** The Printer Setup dialog appears.

Depends on the Output Format selection. Displays default printer type/port (or a printer selected from Options…) or lets you type the name of the print file you want to create

Lets you choose to send output to a file or to a printer

Increases or reduces the size of the output. Reports are designed to fit on a page, but if necessary, scale the report down.

Specifies the number of copies to print

Allows page orientation

Accepts printer setup specifications and closes the Printer Setup dialog

Opens the Installation dialog where you can add or remove printer devices and ports

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ▬                      Printer Setup                  │
│                                                        │
│  Output Format:   ● Printer Specific  ○ Generic (File Only)   [PRINTER] │
│                                                        │
│  Printer: │HP LaserJet SI PCL5 on local              │
│                                                        │
│    ┌─ Orientation: ──┐  ┌──────────────────────────┐  │
│    │  ● Portrait     │  │ Scale : │1.00            │  │
│    │                 │  │                           │  │
│    │  ○ Landscape    │  │ Copies: │1               │  │
│    └─────────────────┘  └──────────────────────────┘  │
│                                                        │
│  [ Apply ] [ Save ] [ Reset ] [ Cancel ] [ Options… ] [ Install… ] │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Writes the current printer setup specifications to your default printer information file $HOME/.Xpdefaults

Resets the selections on the Printer Setup dialog to the default settings

Cancels any changes made to Printer Setup and closes the dialog

Opens the Options dialog for choosing printer, print resolution, page size and paper tray
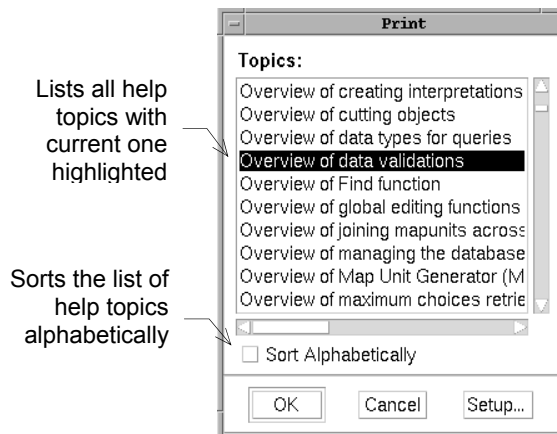
2. In the Output Format field, select **Printer Specific**.

3. To select a printer other than the default printer, click the **Options** dialog. The following dialog appears.

4. On the Printer Name choice list, choose a printer, then make any other selections you prefer.

Choose a
configured printer
at your site.
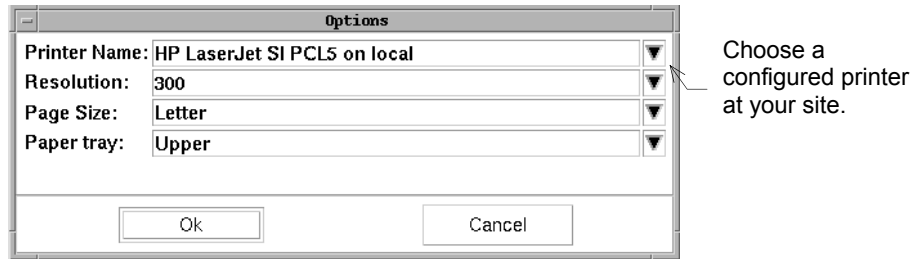
   Note: The HP Laserjet SI PCL5 on local is a NASIS development machine.

5. Click **OK**.

6. Close the Printer Setup dialog by clicking **Apply**.

7. On the online help menu bar, click the **File** menu.

8. Select **Print**. The Print dialog is displayed.

Lists all help
topics with
current one
highlighted

Sorts the list of
help topics
alphabetically

9. To print the selected topic, press **OK**. A message appears indicating that Hyperhelp is "Printing Selected Topic."

   Note: Although Hyperhelp gives you the capability to print all topics, it is not recommended. There are several thousand topics. Furthermore, topics displayed as context-sensitive help are not always clearly understood when separated from the context (point in application where accessed). However, it may be useful to print selected topics from either a consecutive or non-consecutive group.

10. To select consecutive topics from the list, click the first one, hold down the SHIFT key and click the last one. (Another way is to hold down the mouse button and drag over the topics you want to select.)

11. To select topics that are not listed consecutively, hold down the CTRL button and click each topic. (The CTRL button also deselects topics.)

Getting More Help on How to Use Online Help

As mentioned before, NASIS offers an online guide to using the help system. This guide contains procedures ranging from the most basic to the more complex features of online help.

1. On the main help window, click the **Help Topics** button.

2. Open the book **NASIS Online Help Guide** by highlighting it and clicking the **Open** button. (Some systems allow you to open a book by double-clicking.)

3. In the same way, open each book within the hierarchy of the NASIS Online Help Guide. (Sample screen displayed on next page.)

Help Topics dialog

Contents | Index | Find

Click a topic, and then click Display.

- Introduction to the Help Topics dialog
- What's new and different in this release
- Conceptual Guide
- **NASIS Online Help Guide** — *Online guide to using the online help system*
  - The basics — *The basics*
    - Understanding the help system
    - Recognizing help conventions
  - Getting context–sensitive help (On Context) — *Getting context-sensitive help*
  - Navigating through help — *Navigating through Help*
    - Introduction to the Help Topics dialog
    - Introduction to the Main Help Screen
    - Using pop–ups to get definitions
    - Using jumps and browse sequences to access related top
  - Using help menus, commands, and keys — *Help on menus, commands, and keys*
    - Using help menus and commands
    - Using help toolbar buttons
    - Using the keyboard for help
    - Using the floating help menu
  - Locating specific information — *Locating specific information*
    - Searching by keyword (Index)
    - Searching for a particular word or phrase (Find)
    - Rebuilding the full–text index
    - Returning to previously–viewed topics (Back, History)
    - Returning to frequently–used topics (Bookmarks)
  - Customizing the help topics — *Customizing the help topics*
    - Making notes on help topics (Annotate)
    - Copying help topics to other applications (Copy)
  - Improving the readability of help topics — *Improving on-screen readability of topics*
    - Selecting from three predetermined display sizes
    - Varying display size by percentage
  - Printing help topics — *Printing topics*
    - Configuring a printer
    - Selecting printer, resolution, page size, orientation and tray
    - Printing the current topic
    - Printing all topics
    - Printing selected topics

Close | Cancel

Note: You have finished this lesson. Browse through the online help system if you like, and when you're finished, select the **File** menu on the main help window, and select **Exit.** This action closes both the main help window and the Help Topics.